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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/730,672	12/06/2000	Jeffrey J. Brown	FIS9-2000-0099US1	8794

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INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS MACHINES CORPORATION
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EXAMINER

AHMED, SHAMIM

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1765

5

DATE MAILED: 09/11/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/730,672

Applicant(s)

BROWN ET AL.

Examiner

Shamim Ahmed

Art Unit

1765

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 December 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 06 December 2000 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2. 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.
3. Regarding claim 1, the phrase "lighting a capacitive plasma in accordance with the preset matching condition and a desired power exceeding a power required to maintain the capacitive plasma by an excess power" renders the claim indefinite because it is unclear whether a power is introduced or increased the power, which is required to maintain the capacitive plasma in order to have the excess power for lighting the inductive plasma.
4. Regarding claim 2, using the "second plasma" and the "first plasma" is confusing because in the lighting step the capacitive plasma is named as "second plasma" and in lines 7-8, the capacitive plasma again named as the "first plasma".
Correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 1765

6. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

7. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nallan et al (6,399,507).

Nallan et al disclose a plasma etching process, wherein controlling both the capacitive plasma and the inductive plasma produces stable plasma. Nallan et al also disclose that desired power is established to light both the capacitive and the inductive plasma (col.2, lines 50-col.3, lines 4). Nallan et al teach that the power level is established with the help of a matching network for generating and sustaining a high-density plasma (col.7, lines 32-35).

As to claim 3, Nallan et al teach that the plasma processing apparatus includes a coil for delivering power to the plasma and a current is produced in the coil due to the desired power supplied to the coil (col.9, lines 35-42 and figure 2).

As to claim 5, the gas pressure is 2 mTorr during the inductive plasma generation (col.10, lines 6-10).

Art Unit: 1765

As to claim 7, Nallan et al teach that the power level is greater than 20 watts (see figure 5).

Nallan et al teach that the capacitive or inductive current produced by the power source or the coil is a function of the amount of power applied for plasma generation (col.9, lines 39-42).

Nallan et al do not explicitly teach that the presetting condition of a matching network is determined to light a plasma.

However, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of claimed invention to determine a presetting condition of a matching net work in order to tune the net work for effectively lighting a plasma as taught by Nallan et al.

Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Flamm (6,231,776) discloses a process for igniting an inductive plasma for etching a substrate and also discloses that it is known a capacitive plasma must be ignited first in order to sustain an inductive (col.13, lines 48-54); Mavretic et al (6,424,232) disclose a process, wherein a matching net work is introduced and varies the impedance to create a capacitive plasma and similar principles applies for the inductive plasma; Donohoe (6,123,802) disclose a plasma process, wherein the process is controlled by a matching net work; Ye et al (5,710,486) disclose a conventional process to ignite inductive plasma.

Art Unit: 1765

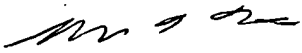
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shamim Ahmed whose telephone number is (703) 305-1929. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Thu (7:00-5:30) Every Friday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Benjamin Utech can be reached on (703) 308-3836. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)-872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

Shamim Ahmed
Examiner
Art Unit 1765

SA
September 5, 2002


BENJAMIN L. UTECH
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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